

discounts toward premiums on their insurance coverage. In doing so, the federal crop insurance program will work in a manner like other forms of insurance. If a driver has a good driving record, he or she should justly pay premiums that reflect such. In the same manner, under this legislation, farmers who rarely file insurable losses will receive premium discounts under the pilot program established by this bill.

All farmers will benefit from the reform set by the Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999 as this legislation raises the basic coverage level for catastrophic coverage, the lowest unit of crop insurance protection. Currently, this basic level of protection is completely free to the farmer and covers 50% of the grower's average production history at 55% of market price. This legislation will increase that basic coverage level to 60% of the farmer's average production history at 70% of the market price. Doing so will offer an more feasible safety net to the producer should a loss be incurred.

Mr. Speaker, farmers in my home state of Mississippi assert that one of the primary problems faced by the current crop insurance program is that it is sometimes abused and exploited by farmers who seek to swindle the federal government at the expense of fellow producers. The Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999 will reduce insurance fraud through imposing stiffer penalties for anyone, including insurance companies, agents, and producers, who participate in fraudulent activities.

This legislation will also protect new farmers or farmers who rent new land or decide to produce new crops by assigning them a fair yield until they are able to generate sufficient actual production data. In addition, farmers who encounter multiple year disasters will be protected by being assigned a yield equal to eighty-five percent of the county transition yield for nay year in which the farmer's yield falls below that eighty-five percent level.

The Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999 reforms the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation Board of Directors to include more farmers from different regions of the United States and creates an office to work with private insurance companies who develop new crop insurance products. The legislation goes further by reducing the amount of excessive underwriting gains received by these insurance companies.

Mr. Speaker, our agricultural producers are demanding a more feasible and more affordable federal crop insurance program. I believe that this crop insurance legislation is a sound and fair proposal which can be supported by producers from all regions of the nation.

TRIBUTE TO MS. ASHLY HUNTER  
AND MS. LAURA JANE AMODEI  
ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN  
THE INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL  
OLYMPICS

**HON. FRANK MASCARA**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 15, 1999*

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor two special constituents in my district who are the epitome of strength, determination, and selflessness, Ms. Ashly Hunter and Ms. Laura Jane Amodei.

I am proud to announce that Ashly Hunter will compete in swimming when the Inter-

national Special Olympics convenes June 26 through July 4 in Raleigh/Durham, NC, where she will swim the 25-meter breaststroke and the 50-meter backstroke. This is a dream for her that has been 20 years in the making.

Many people helped Ashly make her dream come true. In addition to her parents, Ashly's coach, Ms. Laura Jane Amodei, is also paramount to Ashly's success. Ms. Amodei has also been selected as an alternate coach to this year's games after dedicating over 20 years to the Special Olympics as a coach for the Mon Valley Swimming team of Washington Valley. Those who know Ms. Amodei and those fortunate enough to have been coached by her say she inspires her athletes to achieve maximum individual performance. Indeed, Ms. Amodei has enabled Ashly to master the very backstroke and breast stroke techniques that won her the right to compete in this year's games. It is this dedication and selflessness of special Americans such as Ms. Laura Jane Amodei that should inspire all of us to be the best citizens we can be.

Ms. Hunter won the right to compete in the International Games after a series of local, regional, and State victories, where she compiled an amazing 101 victories, including 56 gold, 31 silver, and 14 bronze. She will become the first Mon Valley resident to attend the International Special Olympics after competing for 15 years in the Washington County Special Olympics.

Whether Ashly is cheering the California University Vulcans basketball team on to victory, exploring her love of music and dance, or bike riding with her parents, who she inspired to become certified aquatic coaches, Ashly's love of life and people burns brightly. Her grit serves as testament to the joy and wonder of life to those around her. Needless to say, we, in the 20th District of Pennsylvania, are extremely proud of Ms. Hunter's fine accomplishments and the person she inspires us to be.

Mr. Speaker, I know the entire House of Representatives joins me in saluting the hard work and dedication of Ms. Ashly Hunter and Ms. Laura Jane Amodei and wishing them the best of luck at this year's International Special Olympics.

SALUTE TO POLICE CHIEF JOSEPH  
SAMUELS, JR.

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 15, 1999*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor today to salute Police Chief Joseph Samuels, Jr., the first African-American Chief of Police in the City of Oakland.

Police Chief Samuels joined the Oakland Police Department in 1974 after working for a Finance Corporation as a Branch Manager. He rose through the ranks of the Police Department to the position of Captain where he spent three years in the Patrol Division. He later served in the investigative and support units of the Department.

In October, 1991, he was appointed Chief of Police of the City of Fresno in California. He has continued his civic involvement and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Oakland Boys and Girls Club, the Oakland Jazz Alliance, the Alameda County Chapters of the

American Cancer Society and the American Red Cross.

During his tenure as Oakland's Chief of Police, part one felonies were reduced by 23.3%, homicides were reduced by 54.4% and violent crimes fell by 23.2%. Citizen complaints against Police Department personnel also decreased by 44% during Chief Samuels' tenure.

Chief Samuels' other accomplishments include securing over \$30 million in state and federal grants to expand the Department's personnel and community outreach. Chief Samuels also established nine citizen community oriented boards.

Chief Samuels' professional affiliations include membership in the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Police Executive Research Forum, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the California Peace Officers Association, the California Police Chiefs Association, and the Alameda County Chiefs of Police and Sheriff's Association.

Chief Samuels has made a positive and profound impact on the lives of many individuals and organizations throughout the City of Oakland and I know that the community is more safe as a consequence of his leadership.

I proudly join his many friends and colleagues in thanking and saluting him on his years of service to the community and his commitment to law enforcement.

TRIBUTE TO THE INTERNATIONAL  
AFRICAN ARTS FESTIVAL

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 15, 1999*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the International African Arts Festival, formally known as the African Street Festival, has been a cultural institution providing a venue for African-inspired culture to the Brooklyn community for 28 years. Started in 1971 as a graduation ceremony for the Uhuru Sasa School, the festival grew into a major event attracting international attention. Held each summer during the July 4th weekend, the festival features an African marketplace of over 200 vendors providing unique arts, crafts, foods, and goods from all over the world. The marketplace is the backdrop for continuous entertainment on two stages. The festival has hosted award winning and internationally recognized entertainers and recording artists.

In 28 years, the festival has grown into a major event for the Brooklyn community. Attracting over 50,000 visitors each year, the International African Arts Festival continues to grow and dig its roots deeper into the community. Among the festivals many featured events are the talent search, "Ankh" awards ceremony, living legends awards, special showcases for seniors, a parade down Fulton street, scholarship presentations, African marketplace, and world-class entertainment.

Tens of thousands of people visit the festival every year just to shop for the diverse, rare items that have become the trademark of the marketplace at the International African Arts festival. The people of New York know that they can come to the festival to find the latest in paintings, sculptures, jewelry, furniture, and goods of every kind. The shopping